

MPSC Meeting Minutes

Jan 15, 2020

Clark Room, Town Hall

MPSC Members Present: Janne Corneil, Stacy Lennon, Lynne Lipinsky, Jason Molten, Jessica Nierenberg, Madeleine Blake, Barney Arnold, Eva Mostoufi, Tanya White (Kerry Kissinger not present)

Members of the Public: Ruth Crampton, George Mansfield, Gretchen Caywood, Carren P, Glenn Urban, David Freedman, Bob Zogg

Meeting called to order @ 7:06pm.

Subcommittee Reports:

- **MP Chairs Update** – talked about assigning us to other committees. We have 4 liaisons but other committees like facilities, energy task force, etc. came up and need a contact point. Need to sort that out. If any of you have flexibility or ability to take on a committee, let Janne know. List of committees to reach out to – Janne to send as follow-up.
- **BOS** – nothing to report. BOS thought CM would come talk to whole board. But individual interviews have been happening. Reid (chair) and Arnold think CM @ BOS meeting would be good. So there's a public discussion – taped, open to the public, convo as a group, BOS priorities. It'll get reported in Mosquito, etc. and will help communicate to the public that this is a serious effort. Suggested that CM forego individual interviews in favor of public meetings. Feb 11. Sue to reach out to Tim re scheduling.
- **Planning Board** – March 23 or 30 for CM. Open Space Rec Task Force/Committee. Lots of overlap with master plan. Effort every 5-7 years. Ranking all unprotected parcels in town 10 acres and above. Weighing ag interest, recreation, species and diversity, vistas, etc. March 18 and 24. Includes privately owned land, in case they become available for purchase. CM – curious how town weighs priorities, e.g. the lens here is open space. How does that weigh out against, e.g., affordable housing? Arnold – we don't have other similar processes. [David from open space – the ranking isn't binding – it's information. It's also for private land, so master plan would only talk about 'areas' not individual private parcels]
- **School Committee** – Visioning continues
- **FinCom** – lobbied my committee to participate in kitchen conversations. Attended a gathering w/ neighbors and good enthusiasm there as well. Last night was first night Open Space came to our attention... [filings of some sort]?
- **Communications** – publicizing survey results, and blasting out the kitchen conversations.

Discussion Items:

- **Kitchen Conversations Planning.** Arnold – sent updated spreadsheet. 29 confirmed hosts, 3 have already set their dates. Another 16 have been asked but haven't confirmed.
 - Now's the time to send your invitation out.
 - Arnold happy to host a 'briefing' conversation. So the sooner we know the names the better.
 - We need to reach out to the 'hinterlands' – don't have a lot of ppl on the northwest or southeast side of town.
 - Reid is on Carleton. Host can do 3-4 at once with a few facilitators...
 - Grand finale at the library event?
 - CM materials – kitchen kit.
 - Sue – great job Barney! Have never had a client take and run with this idea like this.
 - Questions can be posted online right away – they should be public, they're compelling and will get people interested in participating. Have packet be downloadable.
 - CM has put the kitchen conversation kit together, will incorporate Arnold's day-of information into it. Sue walked group through contents of the draft kit.
 - Do we have participation targets? If yes, sign-in sheet might ask for more information e.g. address, age, do you have kids in school?
 - Make copies available at town hall, Fern's, the school, etc.
 - Need to look twice at the town GIS layers as the 'developable land' (assessors codes). Recommendation from Janne: conservation-constricted? Town-owned land?
 - Question 2 – community center. No one knows who would pay for it?
 - Public safety building – combine with community center? DPW building also in disrepair.
 - Glenn – higher order conversation about where we're going:
 - Status quo, struggle through
 - Tighten belt, shrink school, keep taxes low
 - Premium services & taxes
 - Targeted growth
 - Become a different kind of town – e.g. Lincoln
 - Regionalize everything. The Carlisle park of Concord.
 - CM – we've found what happens is ppl realize there needs to be a change, but it keeps getting punted.
 - Janne: important to ground this in a starker reality...
 - The challenge is – kitchen conversation is a chance to educate people and have an impact. So typically, these questions are a little lighter and get people get engaged and get them to participate in other things...
 - Jessica – briefing information for hosts? To set the stage that Carlisle is at a crossroads and has serious decisions to make and tradeoffs to think about.
 - Is a conversation about where a community center might go the best one to have for #1?

- **CM Updates** – 30 interviews, now BOS on the calendar. Janne and CM to consult on more dates & milestones. Draft map of existing conditions to be sent to this group for 2/12 meeting.
- This group needs to have two meetings before public meeting. Combine 2/26 working group meeting with MPSC meeting... still a possibility of another meeting given we have a lot of work to do.
- Decision about how results get returned to committee for tabulation. **MPSC needs to take responsibility for this.**
- **MPSC member insights discussion:**
 - **Madeleine** – goals for committee, make a plan for rest of year and outreach. Tables at Ferns, and the dump, get a thermometer for town center, signs, surveying. Maybe working group people.
 - **Janne** – Carlisle a unique place. I hope there's a clear sense of values and goals and aspirations and strategies, and they are looked at through a lens of the character of the town. Also has strategically located farms – working farms – and it defines the character of the town. If there's a way to build a new economy and community character out of challenges around ag and food production and land mgmt... Agree w/ Glenn this is a highly educated town, affluent, with resources to do things in a creative way not silver bullets but addressing chronic issues we can't solve. Struggle with idea of building anything new when we have vacant/underutilized buildings in town.
 - **Jason** – I'm worried about where town will go, and the price of things will always go up, things will need to be replaced... will need a good plan that works for everybody, and how to be realistic about what that is. This is an outpost on the inner belt of 495 and Boston will continue to grow this way. This is our chance to affect the change...
 - **Lynn** – grew up in Lowell... in coming out here the thing that tied me to this place was a sense of community. Something that makes me sad is that that seems to be going away... the community has evolved a bit out of that, I don't personally think that's great. Open space was always a draw for me. From a bigger sense, need to rally the troops in terms of doing coordination. Where do people need to gather, hitching our wagon and coordinating activities in the town, finding out from different committees what they're doing, to have a presence here. And, I look at this from a financial perspective, it's great that we maintain a top-notch school, and there's a tradeoff we really have to start to think about. What's the line in the sand – what's enough? What's happened is we've starved the rest of the town in favor of education.
 - **Jessica** – two themes that motivate me. One: Greenough – dilapidated building, so emblematic of a challenge where we could do better. It's a symbol of our inability to coordinate. Two: we have built a de facto wall around us, we can't share the resources we have, it's a safe town with lots of open space, and it's highly desirable. I would love to see more, denser affordable housing to help others take advantage of this.

- **Eva** – I’m definitely looking at the educational piece. I’m hoping people realize how unique we are, education is known as the private school in a public setting. But being really grounded in our community and feel like they’re growing up in safe environment, connected to trails, and things happening in town. How do we look at costs? Not necessarily everyone understands – is it going to programming, or just maintaining things? Can we be creative for how to bring in more money to the school? (e.g. students pay more than school choice) This is a genuine opportunity to look at rezoning and what we can really live with.
- **Barney** – my answer 2 yrs ago would have been really different. When I moved here with my family 32 yrs ago it was a very different community then even though the pop isn’t much larger today. Many more families in town w/ kids than now, more situations where one parent wasn’t working, more volunteers participating in different aspects of the town. Town gov’t was similar in paid positions, yet in last 30 yrs society and ppl here in Carlisle have changed how they live their lives. I feel we’re at a point where we haven’t publicly acknowledged that. Need to do that, and then say, what are the characteristics we want to keep, and what are the changes we’ll make to acknowledge that the ppl who live here have changed. Town staff are all over the place – different silos, decisions of town leaders that we wanted it that way. Have the organization of town hall, and people hired to work for the town, have to be organized in a more efficient, coordinated way. There could be some real efficiencies and expertise to do it. We’ve been running like a nonprofit, loose and relaxed and not clear job descriptions or lines of responsibility, and we need to be a business in the best sense of the word.
- **Stacy** – long term, my family wants to stay so our home will be a place for the kids to come back. How can we stay? If we plan to grow older and retire, I’m worried we won’t make big choices now. We need BIG CHANGES! Just connect a few things, gathering spaces, small changes, big price tags – feel impossible without major big ideas. Might keep us going for five years... but we’ll be back again. Can we have consensus around big decisions?
- **Ruth** – What if at public meeting – what will Carlisle look like if we don’t make change? Can we show quantifiable options? Future scenarios? Give people images of what will happen without major decisions.
- **CM - Friday or Monday to send revised questions...**
- Review of meeting minutes. Passed unanimously.

Adjourned at 9:05pm.

Prepared by Stacy Lennon.

Approval date: 2/5/20